

rect, could not have been surpassed by Alice. And yet . . . Her demeanour was without question prodigiously splendid in its ignoring of all that she had gone through. And yet . . . Even in that moment of complicated misery he had enough strength to hate her because he had been fool enough to make love to her. No excuse whatever for him, of course!

"I was in India when I first heard of this case," Lady Sophia continued. "At first I thought it must be a sort of Tichborne business over again. Then, knowing you as I did, I thought perhaps it wasn't."

"And as Lady Sophia happens to be in London now," put in Mr. Oxford, "she is good enough to give her invaluable evidence on my behalf."

"That is scarcely the way to describe it," said Lady Sophia coldly. "I am only here because you compel me to be here by subpœna. It is all due to your acquaintanceship with my aunt."

"Quite so, quite so!" Mr. Oxford agreed. "It naturally can't be very agreeable to you to have to go into the witness-box and submit to cross-examination. Certainly not. And I am the more obliged to you for your kindness, Lady Sophia."

Priam comprehended the situation. Lady Sophia, after his supposed death, had imparted to relatives the fact of his engagement, and the unscrupulous scoundrel, Mr. Oxford, had got hold of her and was forcing her to give evidence for him. And after